



Reaching and Serving the Persecuted Church

IN TOUCH MONTHLY

1 May 2005

On a roof top in Joppa, Peter discovered that, “God is no respecter of persons.” There is no such thing in the marketplace of God’s economy as “Most Favored Nation” status. The holy city, pictured in Revelation, has twelve gates. Those on the east face the dawn and welcome all who come to Christ in their youth. Those on the west bid farewell to the setting sun and provide a final opportunity for one of age to enter. Little Samuel, dedicated to the LORD before his birth, and the repentant thief on the cross, will stand side by side before His throne – redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Transition & Transformation in Europe

Itineraries Linked

Last month ITMI’s **Tim Keller** (on his way to the USA for 6 weeks) stopped over in Europe for a week and traveled with **Bill Bathman** through Germany and Poland for ministry. This coincided with Dr. **Peter Hammond** who was in Europe on a 4-week trek through 10 countries, preaching in six of them. They met up in Berlin and ministered together in Poland. This is their story:

The overnight train from Budapest arrived at 08:18 in Berlin. Bill and Tim were on the platform to meet Peter. After breakfast they set off on the 4-hour drive to Poznan, Poland where **Piotr Zaremba** was waiting for them with a full schedule of meetings and appointments.

POLAND



Bill with the Boones in Poznan

On Saturday Peter and Tim had a morning **Biblical Worldview Seminar** in Poznan. Bill took the opportunity to meet with **Tucker and Meredith Boone**, some of the newer ITMI missionaries on the field. More later about this delightful young couple and their darling little “Boonies” – Paisley and Bethany.

In the afternoon the team (Peter, Tim, Bill and Piotr) traveled 30 miles to Gniezno, the former capital of Poland and an important center for the Roman Catholic Church. They had lunch with the **Banicki** family. Darek, the father, is an historian, teacher at the Bible school and preaches in Baptist churches in central Poland. Daria, his wife, is a chemical engineer by profession, but a fulltime mom to three children. Michael, their 11-year old boy suffers from Niemann-Pick Syndrome, Type C and requires 24-hour care. Please pray that medication, now in the test-stage, will soon be available.

Late afternoon the team held a modified BWS at the Baptist Church. This Church is strategically located in Gniezno and is the only evangelical witness in the city. Afterwards they had dinner with the pastor, **Janusz Fredyk** and his family.

Sunday morning **Bob and Sue Taber** picked up Tim just after 8 a.m. to take him to Gniezno for the morning service. Peter and Bill went with Piotr to the 5N Baptist Church

in Poznan for their morning service. It was Bill’s first time to preach in the **5N Church**.

[*New Birth* (required), *New Testament* orientation, *New* discipleship leading to *New* direction in your life.]

Services are held in an old cinema building complete with theater seats and a stage. Peter brought greetings then left to lead the children’s service and challenge them. Bill preached the Gospel from John 20 and several precious souls came to Christ.

This was the Sunday that Pope John Paul II died. Imagine being in Poland on the day that the Polish Pope died. All across the country flags were at half-mast with a black sash across them. There was a genuine heartfelt sense of loss among the people he had been instrumental in liberating from communism.

Piotr had arranged a 4 p.m. meeting at the Mission office, a large facility located next to the First Baptist Church. It houses the **Bread of Life** office, **KOMPAS** and other mission outreaches. He invited all the foreign



Daria loving on Michael

Cracks in Islam: Anticipating the Victory

Historians believe that Hitler's bombing of London was his most serious mistake in World War II. Certainly the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor was their greatest miscalculation. It is now becoming evident that the Islamic attack of September 11, 2001 on New York and Washington D.C., was probably the most foolish act ever committed by Muslim radicals.

Now the Muslim extremists must deal with a President who means what he says. Look at what has happened since 9/11. The radical Islamic Taliban regime in **Afghanistan** is destroyed and the scattered remnant are hiding in caves, while the country has held its first free elections.

Then **Iraq**, the Muslim world's most powerful military superpower, is humbled within a few weeks and the arrogant Saddam Hussein, found cowering in a spider hole, now sits in prison while millions of his fellow countrymen went to the poles to freely elect a new leader to represent their interests.

For 38 years **Nigeria** had suffered under a series of Islamic despotic dictators. The 12 Northern provinces enforced Sharia law, burned hundreds of churches and massacred thousands of Christians. Nigeria hosted the 'Islam in Africa Conference' and was officially recognized as an Islamic state by the World Islamic Organization. Now after the first free elections in Nigerian history a Christian President has come to power.

Seeking to impose its policies of Islamisation and Arabisation throughout **Sudan**, the National Islamic Front (one of only three governments in the world to recognize the Taliban) waged *Jihad* against the Christian Black South for over 20 years, killing an estimated 2 million Christians. When U.S. and coalition forces attacked Afghanistan the NIF saw the handwriting on the wall and sought a cease-fire with the South. When the allies went after Saddam the NIF began peace talks with the South, but held off signing them until after last November's election and a Bush victory (see *ITM* January '05).

Some years ago, Saudi Arabia paid off **Malawi**'s national debt in exchange for choosing their next government. Surprise, surprise it was an intolerant Muslim regime and things went downhill fast. The Saudi's used petrol dollars to build hundreds of mosques across the country and were on the verge of introducing Sharia law. Fortunately the Constitution stipulates a two-term limit for the President and Muslim Muluji had to step down, although he remained Chairman of the UDF political party. The people

elected a born-again Christian, President Bingu Wa Mutharika, to replace him.

President Bingu soon realized he was being manipulated by Muslim Middle-Eastern elements controlling their UDF party. After a nearly successful attempt to assassinate him, President Bingu resigned from the party. Other Christian members followed his example and together formed a new Christian party, which leaves the UDF impotent. So Malawi, the last country in Africa to become Muslim, is the first to officially break away from Islam and return to its Christian roots. The cracks are showing up everywhere.

We cannot overlook the recent "Cedar Revolution" in **Lebanon**, the only Arab country that was ever a democracy when Christians were the majority there. The flame of freedom was extinguished when Syria invaded in the 70s. Intensified persecution of Christians led many to leave and the Muslims gained a majority. Now liberty is making a comeback in Lebanon.

Last year **Libya** suddenly renounced terrorism and is seeking to cooperate with the West in general and the U.S. in particular. Still more cracks.

The above catalogue of countries represents a very significant portion of former Muslim strongholds. Without a doubt, 9/11 was a tragedy for all concerned. America lost more citizens in that unprovoked and cowardly attack than at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Now it's Islam's turn to lose. The authoritarian Muslim medieval and retrogressive system that would turn the clock back a thousand years in character, culture and costume is suddenly in disarray. People want to be free to choose who will represent them. Christianity offers them that freedom long denied by Islam.

Add to the above other contemporary elements that are currently shaking the foundations of Islam. Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* was shown throughout the Muslim world openly screened in shopping mall cinemas. There has been a phenomenal response to **SAT-7**, a Christian mission broadcasting Gospel programs in Arabic throughout the Middle East. More **missionaries** are focused today on the Muslim world than ever before. More Christians are **praying** for the Muslim world than ever before. Since 9/11 more critical **books** exposing the falsehood and lies of Islam have been written than in previous centuries.

Dr. Peter Hammond, author of *Slavery, Terrorism & Islam – The Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat*, notes, "We have begun to see the first cracks in the monolithic empire of Islam which cannot survive freedom and the Quran cannot withstand critical investigation."

Dear Team,

Our trip to Europe last month was greatly blessed. **Tim Keller** was well received everywhere. He's a joy to travel with and his teachable spirit helps him to learn quickly. Several precious souls trusted Christ in Poland. I met many new friends in Germany and the ministry there was fruitful too. I was able to spend two days in Austria with our daughter Deborah, granddaughter Lenora and two great-grandsons, Johannes and Matthias. There were four generations present.

When the Lord called me in 1961 to work for Him in communist and other restricted-access countries, I responded like Isaiah, "Here am I; send me." I trusted God to protect me and supply my needs and asked only one thing: "Please don't ever let me tell lies about communism in order to

continue my work there." I knew of some who painted a glossy picture of conditions behind the Iron Curtain in order to have the door remain open for them to preach there. I wanted no part of that.

We spent the next 28 years, until the Berlin Wall came down, preaching the Gospel, plus taking Bibles and medical supplies to Christians in Eastern Europe who suffered persecution under various intolerant Marxist regimes. I wrote extensively about the trauma and trials suffered under this unworkable humanistic system. In short, I told the truth about communism – without apology.

During the Cold War many liberals spoke kindly of the communists in the vain hope that "if you're nice to the Russian bear, he will eat you last." Appeasement was in vogue. They are with us still, but in today's climate of political correctness you'll find them apologizing for (or even ignoring) the most outrageous atrocities committed by Muslims; atrocities that make the Marxist look positively humanitarian.

My philosophy remains the same; I will tell the unvarnished truth about Islam even if it's politically incorrect to do so. My authority for this: the words of our Lord Jesus when He said, "*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" John 8:32

Please don't misinterpret my frank analysis of Islam as a lack of love for those who are locked in its embrace. We are ready to risk our lives to win the lost for Christ irrespective of whether their faith is misplaced (as in Islam) or they have no faith (as in communism).

As our ministry expands into the Islamic world we face many of the same problems we did when reaching communist for Christ. For one thing, we cannot speak about our strategy or announce our plans in advance – the Marxists would put you in jail, the Muslims kill you. Silence in this area inevitably results in a shortage of funds to support the ministry, but we'd rather tighten our belts than wind up in custody or a coffin.

We live in gratitude for your prayers.

Yours in His grip,



Bill Bathman



Four generations at the farm

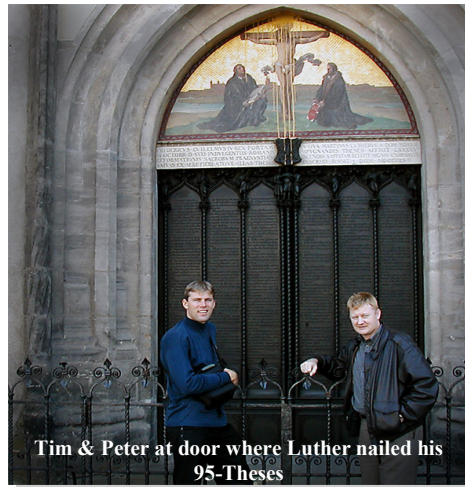
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missionaries (mostly American) that have gone out under ITMI to serve in Poland plus all the nationals serving with us in some related way. ITMI has seven Americans working in Poland: Richard and Brooke Nungesser, Bob and Sue Taber, Tucker and Meredith Boone and Jim LaRose. They were greatly encouraged to see how many Polish and other nationals are working there, including Dawid and Aura Karol (she is from Venezuela), in ministry related to ITMI. Some are from the Ukraine and other countries. There were about 40 people present. Bill gave a brief history of ITMI and underlined the basic vision of the Mission.

GERMANY

It was perhaps ironic that the day after the Pope died, the team was in Wittenberg, Germany – the epic-center of the Reformation. Peter was doing research for a new book, at the Schlosskirche (Castle Church), where on October 31, 1517 Martin Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the door. Later they strolled down the Schlosstrasse past the Rathaus, to visit the home of Philip Melanchthon. Tim exhausted his

batteries taking digital pictures and Peter's pen was never still.



Tim & Peter at door where Luther nailed his 95-Theses

Next day, Peter's morning run took him the entire length of town before breakfast. He was scouting out any historic sites he might have overlooked the previous day. After a shower and buffet *fruhstuck* they loaded the car and drove into Old Town for one more look-around before leaving. They visited the Stadkirche, where Luther preached most of his sermons. The morning and early afternoon was spent in Luther's house where he and his wife Katie lived for over 25 years. It is a museum today and a veritable treasure trove of Reformation information.

Peter went to the bahnhof just before 4 p.m. to catch his train to Berlin. Tim and Bill headed down the A9 autobahn past Leipzig, making for Frankfurt, some 500+ kilometers away. Tim's flight to Phoenix was the next morning. Afterwards Bill enjoyed a 2-day getaway with his Austrian family, before returning to Bensheim, Germany for weekend preaching ministry.

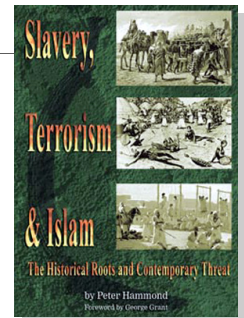
SOUTH AFRICA

The Great Commission Course – Putting Feet to Your Faith. From June 24 to July 14, 2005 in Cape Town. Here's a great opportunity for you to join other Christians from America, Europe and Africa in a uniquely practical missionary course. This life-changing 3-week training period will help you be more innovative and effective in cross cultural evangelism and discipleship. Warning: this is not for the faint-hearted. This is the stuff that real men and women of God are made of. Contact ITMI or e-mail direct: admin@frontline.org.za

Slavery, Terrorism and Islam – The Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat

by: Peter Hammond **\$12.00 + s&h**

Dr. Peter Hammond cuts through layers of misinformation and uncovers astonishing historical facts and details long buried by Islamic revisionist. You'll find out their real agenda for tomorrow by discovering what they actually did yesterday – plus a field-tested plan of how to win Muslims to Christ.



For Praise . . .

1. The encouragement for Bill while in Poland meeting so many people working with ITMI.
2. The enthusiastic response to Bill, Tim and Peter's preaching in Europe during April.
3. Spiritual maturing of our Tucson missionary Tim Keller.

Authorized to Accept  

For Prayer . . .

1. The Great Commission Camp in Cape Town, S. Africa – June 24 to July 14.
2. Bathman's ministry in USA – June to September.
3. Healing for 11-year old Michael Banicki in Poland, with Niemann-Pick Syndrome.
4. Missionaries struggling with language and cultural barriers in Poland.

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